

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Process for manufacturing a composite tape based on reinforcing fibres and on a thermoplastic organic material, consisting in bringing together and in consolidating a multiplicity of continuous yarns, characterized in that:

yarns based on thermoplastic and reinforcing fibres are entrained and brought together in a parallel manner in the form of a sheet;

said sheet is made to enter a zone in which the sheet is heated to a temperature reaching at least the melting point of the thermoplastic without reaching the softening temperature of the reinforcing fibres;

the sheet is made to pass through a rotating impregnation device including heated rollers having heating elements therein, while maintaining the sheet at a temperature at which the thermoplastic is malleable, in order to distribute the molten thermoplastic uniformly and guarantee that the reinforcing fibres are completely impregnated by the latter;

the sheet is introduced into a shaping and centring device including a roller in a shape of a hyperboloid, while maintaining the sheet at a temperature at which the thermoplastic is malleable, so as to obtain a tape formed by bringing the yarns together so as to be touching, thereby creating transverse continuity;

the tape is cooled in order to consolidate the yarns by freezing the thermoplastic and dimensional characteristics of the tape and appearance of the tape are set in order to deliver said composite tape.

2. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the

yarns that are brought together consist of continuous glass filaments and continuous thermoplastic filaments which are co-mingled.

3. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that it consists in unreeling, from wound packages, a continuous yarn of reinforcing filaments and thermoplastic filaments and, while the yarns are being brought together in the form of a sheet, in regulating the tension in the yarns.

4. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterized in that the yarns are stripped of any static electricity before the sheet passes into the heating zone.

5. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the sheet is introduced into an additional heating zone after it has passed through the rotating impregnation device.

6. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that, at the end of the manufacturing line, the tape is wound up in the form of a reel for storing it.

7.-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A process for manufacturing a composite tape, said process comprising the steps of:

entraining and bringing together a multiplicity of yarns based on thermoplastic organic material and reinforcing fibres in a parallel manner to form a sheet;

heating the sheet by entering the sheet into a heating zone in which the sheet is heated to a temperature of at least a melting point temperature of the thermoplastic and less than a softening temperature of the reinforcing fibres;

passing the sheet through a rotating impregnation device including heated rollers

having heating elements therein, while maintaining the sheet at a temperature at which the thermoplastic is malleable, so as to ensure that molten thermoplastic is distributed uniformly and guarantee that the reinforcing fibres are completely impregnated by the molten thermoplastic;

bringing the multiplicity of yarns together so as to be touching using a shaping and centering device including a roller in a shape of a hyperboloid, while maintaining the sheet at a temperature at which the thermoplastic is malleable, so as to obtain a tape having transverse continuity; and

cooling the tape in order to consolidate the multiplicity of yarns by freezing the thermoplastic.

21. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, wherein the multiplicity of yarns comprise continuous glass filaments and continuous thermoplastic filaments that are co-mingled.

22. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, further comprising the steps of unreeling a continuous yarn of reinforcing filaments and thermoplastic filaments; and regulating tension in the continuous yarn while the multiplicity of yarns are being brought together to form the sheet.

23. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, further comprising stripping the multiplicity of yarns of static electricity before the sheet enters the heating zone.

24. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, further comprising the step of introducing the sheet into a second heating zone after the sheet has passed through the rotating impregnation device.

Application Serial No.: 09/668,291  
Response to Advisory Action dated February 3, 2004 &  
Supplemental to Office Action dated October 7, 2003

25. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, further comprising the step of winding the composite tape in a form of a reel.

26. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 20, wherein said step of cooling the tape sets the dimensional and aesthetic characteristics of the composite tape.